

Fall 8-15-2005

ENG 2099-099: Literature and Human Values: Faith, Survival, Progress

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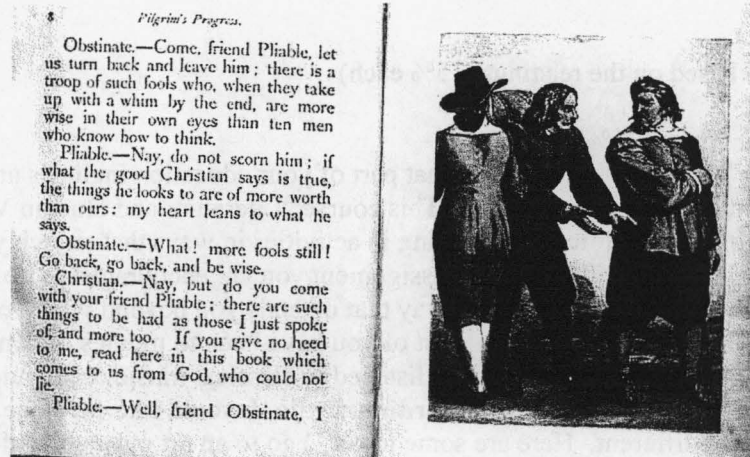
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2099-099

English 2099-094
 "Literature and Human Values: Faith, Survival, Progress"
 Autumn 2005/Coleman Hall 3150
 Class Meeting: 3-4.15pm
 Dr. Dagni Bredesen
 Office Hours: Mon/Tues 1.30-2.45p or by appointment Thurs/Fri.
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 Email: cfstab@eiu.edu Phone: 217-581-6294



Course Overview: In this honors humanities course, we will be reading literature—both fiction and non-fiction—that represents “life-as-journey.” As characters move towards their final destination—often some kind of home—they endure various tests. Thus, in addition to focusing on how these stories of “faith, survival, and progress” are told, we will also be studying what sustains an individual through these trials.

One objective of this course is to develop further a critical appreciation of and a confidence in reading and discussing literature and the ways literature speaks of and to the human condition. Furthermore, in this course, you will have many opportunities for extending and enhancing skills in reading, writing, and speaking in general, in ways that will benefit you throughout your University career, and, indeed, your life.

Please note that this class is **DISCUSSION-DRIVEN**. This means that there is an expectation that each student will be fully prepared for each meeting having read and thought about the text assigned for the day and able to initiate or contribute to discussion with relevant and meaningful questions or comments that indicate a serious effort to grapple with the readings and the questions that frame this course.

Texts:

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*
 Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*,
 John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*,
 Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, a slave*.
 Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*
 Mary Doria Russell's *The Sparrow*.
 Course Packet

Please note: You will also need a College Level Dictionary to succeed in this course.

Course Assignments: To achieve the objectives described above students will need to keep up with the rigorous reading schedule and actively participate in the class discussion. The following assignments will foster the active engagement necessary to make this a productive and exciting learning experience.

I. Exams and Quizzes:

*There will be a mid-term (15%) and a final examination (20%). I reserve the right to give pop quizzes as warranted if I sense students are not keeping up with their readings.

II. Papers:

*Two essays based on the readings (15% each)

III. Extending Your Map: (15%):

The word "university" carries with it the idea that part of your education includes an exploration of the universe, that is, the world around you. This course "Literature and Human Values" offers you the opportunity to gain credit for participating in activities in ways that stretch you intellectually, politically, personally. For this assignment you are encouraged to go to an event or performance, a lecture, a concert that in some way that extends you beyond what you have previously experienced. Thus for example, most of you have been to movies or concerts but maybe you have never watched an "art film" or listened to classical music or attended a ballet. **I would like you to do things you would not ordinarily do**, I would like each one of your personal field trips to be different. Here are some ideas 1) go to an art museum and look at an exhibit then focus on one particular painting for 15 minutes. 2) go to an ethnic restaurant that serves food other than Mexican, Chinese, Italian, or any other food you are familiar with. Pay attention to the ambience, décor, what you order, how it tastes, etc. 3) do something different; for example give blood, register to vote, volunteer in the community NOT because your fraternity or sorority has mandated that you do it but for its own sake. 4) attend a lecture/presentation in a field that is different from the one you are studying in. 5) other—clear with me.

The experience itself is part one of this assignment. Part two is writing it up in a thoughtful, well-crafted way that clearly describes the experience itself and explains in what ways this experience has taken you beyond your usual realm of experience, and finally reflects on this experience in relation to something we have discussed in class. This paper should be type written, carefully proofread and its length should run 2 to 3 pages. You will write three of these papers.

IV. Miscellaneous assignments, worksheets etc. designed to promote careful reading and intelligent discussion. (10%).

V. Film Review based on one of the movies listed at the end of the syllabus. (10%)

Attendance Policy: You may miss 2 classes no questions asked, no excuses needed. After 2 classes your grade will drop one level. For example, if you were earning a B, you would be dropped to C. If you miss 3 or more classes you will receive a failing grade for this class. This means you will probably not want to squander your allowable absences but save them for when you need them.

Course Schedule:

Please note this schedule is provisional and subject to change. Also, students should read assigned text(s) prior to the class in which the text(s) will be discussed.

Week One:

8/23

Introduction to Class/ Biblical Swoosh
Everyman, an introduction to **ALLEGORY**

HMWK: Read scholarly introduction to *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the front matter (Chronology, title page, Author's apology and up to page 22)

Please be prepared to identify a section of *PP* that you think is interestingly allegorically and what you think is being allegorically represented.

Start filling out study guide and be prepared to discuss where Christian goes, whom he meets, and the significance of these places and encounters.

8/24

Discuss *Pilgrim's Progress* up to and including page 22 (see HMWK above)
HMWK: Read pages 23-78, be prepared to discuss, and continue filling out study guide.

Week Two:

8/29

Discuss assigned reading, up to and including page 78.

HMWK: pages 79-104, Pick up course packet at Copy Express in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Student Union Building, second floor.

8/31

Discuss assigned reading

HMWK: Finish reading *Pilgrim's Progress* and finish filling out worksheet, which will be turned in on Thursday.

Also, read the excerpted chapters from Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* contained in the course packet, to be discussed also on Thursday, September 7th.

Week Three:

9/05

LABOR DAY/NO CLASSES

9/07

Discuss the end of *Pilgrim's Progress* and the way Alcott uses Bunyan's allegory in her novel *Little Women*.

HMWK: Read *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* Chapters 1-5

Week Four:

9/12

Wrap-up discussion of *Little Women* chapters and discuss *Frederick Douglass* chapters 1-5, start filling out worksheet.

Introduction to the first paper: Relating the Part to the Whole.

HMWK: Read Chapters 6-10 and fill out worksheet.

9/14

Discuss *Narrative* and **WRITING WORKSHOP**

HMWK: First Paper due Monday, 9/19

Read in the course packet "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?"

Week Five:

9/19

First Paper Due

Discuss "What to the Slave..."

* Please note: Guest Lecture by Gary Gildner—poet, fiction writer, memoirist—speaking today at Tarble Art Gallery at 4.30.

9/21

Intro to the Index assignment

HMWK: read *Jane Eyre*: Author's Preface and chapters I-IV

Week Six:

9/26

Discuss assigned readings HMWK: *Jane Eyre* chapters V-XV

9/28

Discuss assigned readings HMWK: *Jane Eyre* chapters XI-XXVI

Week Seven:

10/03

Discuss assigned readings HMWK *Jane Eyre* chapters XXVI-XXX

* Please note: Guest Lecture by Nancy Baron—science writer and environmentalist—speaking today at 4.30.

10/05

Discuss assigned readings HMWK Finish reading *Jane Eyre*

Hand out Midterm Prep sheet.

Week Eight:

10/10

Jane Eyre Conclusion

Index Due Today

Introduce and assign to view *Black Robe*

10/12

Midterm

HMWK: PLEASE WATCH ASSIGNED FILM *Black Robe*.

Special Showing of *Black Robe* Thursday Night October 13th in Coleman Hall room 3150 or View *Black Robe* on reserve in the library. Write a one page single spaced analysis of the film based on study questions due Monday, October 17th.

Week Nine:

10/17

Film analysis due

Discuss film and introduce *The Sparrow*

HMWK: *The Sparrow* chapters 1-5

10/19

Discuss readings

HMWK: *The Sparrow* chapters 5-13

Week Ten:

10/24

Discuss readings

HMWK: *The Sparrow* chapters 14-22

10/26

Discuss reading HMWK: *The Sparrow* chapters 23-32

Week Eleven:

- 10/31 Discuss *The Sparrow*'s conclusion. Introduce *Purple Hibiscus*
11/02 *Purple Hibiscus*

Week Twelve:

- 11/07 *Purple Hibiscus*

- 11/09 *Purple Hibiscus*

HMWK: Finish *Purple Hibiscus* and bring *Life of Pi* to class

Week Thirteen:

- 11/14 Wrap-up discussion of *Purple Hibiscus* and introduce *Life of Pi*

- 11/16 *Life of Pi* Part One

HMWK: For Thanksgiving Break: Read *Life of Pi* PART TWO

Week Fourteen:

- 11/28 Discuss: *Life of Pi* Part Two
HMWK: Read *Pi* Part Three

- 11/30 Discuss the two interpretations of events: Which one should we believe?
Intro to Second Paper. Final Exam prep sheet distributed.

Week Fifteen:

- 12/05 Preparation
12/07 Debate/ Class Wrap Up
12/09 Second Paper Due

Final Exam: Monday, Dec. 12 5:15-7:15 pm

Suggested Films: * you will need to get my approval if you wish to write on a film not included in this list. More titles will be added.

Dogville

The Mission

At Play in the Fields of the Lord

Tender Mercies

Wings of Desire

The Apostle

Schindler's List

Downfall

The Eel (Unagi)

The Station Agent

The End of the Affair

A Long Night's Journey into Day

Central Station

Welcome to Sarajevo

Harrison's Flowers